

# the INTERNATIONALIST

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# the INTERNATIONALIST

A MARXIST QUARTERLY

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## INTERNATIONALISM

The Left Communist International current is the only remaining internationalist movement within the proletariat. Capitalism in its decline has fatally infected with the seeds of its decay the two old internationals (Social-Democracy and Stalinism) as well as Trotskyism, which is split on the same lines as world Imperialism; one section of Trotskyism under the leadership of Shactman defending "democracy", and the other under the leadership of Cannon, defending Russian Imperialism. Existing along side these pseudo-proletarian movements in decay are a host of tendencies, too numerous, for the purposes of this introduction, to mention in detail, which in one manner or another help imprison the workers within bourgeois nationalist democratic ideology of the Truman brand or the Stalin brand.

A number of the above currents profess to internationalism very vociferously. Either directly or through inference they raise the slogan, "Neither

Washington nor Moscow", accompanied in many instances with very erudite analyses of the theoretical and practical aspects of the class struggle, that show no understanding of the new stage of capitalism in its decline and therefore draw erroneous conclusions on the political course to be followed; conclusions that are catastrophic as far as the revival of the proletarian revolutionary movement is concerned.

It is not enough to raise the slogan, "Neither Washington nor Moscow" and defend "democracy" with "left" phrases and play the role of loyal opposition to the capitalist trade union leadership and advocate the classic instrument of betrayal of the working class, the Labor Party. It is not enough to be against the defense of Russian Imperialism while asserting Russia is anti-capitalist. It is not enough to assert that Russia is a "workers' state" and refuse to defend it because of its "nationalist bureaucracy". It is not enough to hold that Yugoslavia is a nationalist bureaucratic workers state. It is not enough to attack it in "peace", and defend it in "war".

It is not enough to depend on constitutional guarantees to fight for the interests of the working class, in the current conspiracy trials, spy trials, and loyalty witch hunts. (In which the agents of Russian Imperialism are used as guinea pigs in the effort of the U.S. capitalist state to install a police-state capitalist regime as a prerequisite for the successful stabilization of its tottering economy, and as a necessary measure of centralization in order to win the coming Third Imperialist World War).

Any of the political currents of the so-called "left" that hold any or all of the above political positions are not genuine revolutionary internationalists, regardless of their personal or collective sincerity.

Revolutionary Internationalism, not only must be a desire to oppose Imperialism, it must be based on a correct appraisal of the present evolution of the capitalist regime.

None of the tendencies claiming to be internationalist have a glimmering of an idea of the new stage of the accumulation of capital and the development of the

capitalist - state form in the period when the accumulation of capital reaches a state - level. Therefore, not understanding the role of the capitalist state, they advocate and support Labor Parties which strengthen the accumulation of capital on a State - level; support the trade union bureaucracy which actually demands State - capitalist intervention into the economy. They characterize Russia as a "workers'" state; or a bureaucratic nationalist workers' state; or bureaucratic collectivism; thereby blinding the workers to the developing state- capitalism on a world scale, and consequently retards the ideological rearming of the proletariat in the struggle for a Socialist society.

We emphasize again: Only the Left Communists have a complete understanding and analysis of the capitalist regime. We think it is proven by its consistent struggle against opportunism in the old Social-Democratic international, in the Third International, and against Trotsky in the Left opposition. This is the subject matter of the article, "A Short History of the Left Communist International".

The second article on "The Conditions for the Formation of the Revolutionary Party of the Working Class" answers the question, as no other movement has been capable of doing, of why capitalism has been able to prevent successful revolution since the Russian revolution of October 1917; what the new stage of capitalist accumulation means in terms of the political state; and brings out in the clearest light the precise role of the revolutionary party.

We invite those who are seeking the road to building the vanguard, to study these articles carefully. We are firm in our conviction they will ultimately join with us in the task of reviving genuine revolutionary internationalism.

July 8, 1949

## A SHORT HISTORY OF THE LEFT COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

This English translation of the history of the Left Communist International recalls historic points marking decisive moments of the Communist movement not only in Italy, but internationally.

The Internationalist Communist Party of Italy, established in 1943, was not accidental or spontaneous, but the outgrowth of a precise political tradition.

The historic line of this tradition passes through the first Imperialist War, the Russian Revolution and the founding of the Third International. It passed through the international counter-offensive of capitalism (Fascism in Italy), the counter-revolution in Russia and the opportunist degeneration of the Communist International. Finally, in the political death of this International and the march of society toward the second World War.

The political line, retraced above, is the struggle and rupture with reformist socialism, the struggle and rupture with opportunism inside the Communist movement: at first in the Comintern, but equally, later on in the International Left opposition, against the positions of Trotskyism.

Thus, the foundation of the Internationalist Communist Party of Italy drew to a head an ideological and political struggle of more than twenty years, from the very inception of the Italian section of the Third International.

The foundation of the Italian Communist Party in 1921, was connected with the struggle of tendencies within the old Socialist Party on the issue of the Imperialist War of 1915-1918, and the question of the Russian Revolution.

Three principal tendencies manifested themselves in the Socialist Party. The Right Wing, represented by the majority of the parliamentary group and some leaders of the Italian Confederation of Labor, were opposed to intervention in the war (World War I) at the time, because of nationalist and "class" interests. That is, they were opposed to the war in a limited and contingent sense. In parliament they voted against the war and against war credits. But after the enemy invasion of 1917, they made every effort to transform the party into an instrument

of national defense.

The center wing, represented by the party administration and by the bulk of the intransigents, curbed the Confederation of Labor leaders and the parliamentarians, and refused, even after the invasion, to support the war. However, it refused in principle and practice to open any action of struggle against the Bourgeoisie and the State in War. It held to the formula of Lazzari: "No support, but no sabotage of the war effort".

Finally, the Left Wing, with a minority in the Party administration, but listened to attentively in the Party, even to the point of having equal strength with the Centre in certain internal party elections, and even winning over the party to carry out the repression of the opportunist tendency of the parliamentary deputies and the union leaders. It demanded that the party take an openly revolutionary position; it advanced the slogan for a general strike, at the moment of military mobilization, and emphasized the danger of agreeing to the suggestion of Caporetto (capitulation to national defensism). The Left Wing, however, did not succeed in getting the party to carry out the line of general strike as part of the whole policy.

The war ended; the three tendencies had to face the problem of the conquest of political power by the proletariat through armed struggle, and the issue of the Russian Revolution.

The reformists under Turati passed into the camp of those who rejected as "anti-marxist," the Leninist criteria and characterizations, and also rejected the October revolution in Russia.

The centre of the Party, lead by Serrati, editor of "Avanti", vacillated gravely. He supported in words the revolutionary directives and even spoke of revolution in Italy; but at the same time he exhibited an attachment to all the legal positions gained by the Socialist Party in Italy, desiring to profit in the electoral successes, due to the popularity gained in the campaign against the war. Above all, he hesitated to break with the reformist Right Wing, under the pretext that even if the Right was defaming the Russian

revolution, the same as the social-democrats of other countries, it could not be reckoned among those who were the social-traitors of the war.

The Left Wing, on the contrary made unconditionally theirs, the political doctrine of the Russian Bolsheviks and the Third International, and held all its forces in readiness to orient the struggle of the Italian working class toward the seizure of power.

At the Congress of Bologna in 1919, the majority of the party failed to free itself from the contradictory politics of the Centre, when, during this period, the social struggle broadened and required a rapid and resolute orientation.

The split was created by the decision of the Communist International at the Congress of June 1920, which demanded of all parties the adoption in theory and practice of a precise communist and revolutionary program, as well as the exclusion of all those raising themselves in opposition to this doctrine and politics. This split was accomplished at the Congress of Leghorn in January 1921: the communist minority which was enlarged was based principally on the "Soviet" group of Naples - that is, the abstentionist (anti-parliamentarian) fraction of Bordiga - and the "New Order" group of Turin, established the Italian Communist Party, Italian section of the Third International. The reformists under Turati openly maintained their anti-communist position, and the majority remained within the "maximalist" politics of Serrati, well defined as "one step forward, two steps backward."

The split completed, the Italian Left was confronted with the control of the Comintern itself, and from the first opposed it on the problem of the formation of Communist Parties.

In France, the split at Tours, patronized by Moscow, was made very much to the right, which carried into the new party reformist tendencies and even individuals who, during the war were social-patriots-Cachin, for example. In Germany at the Congress of Halle and always under the inspiration of Moscow, the left Spartacists fused with a current from the Centre, the so-called "left" lead by Ledebour of the Independent Socialist Party. It was to be the same in Italy: for

after the Leghorn congress, the Executive of the Communist International demanded the establishment of a new fraction in the Socialist Party with which the Italian Communist Party was to hold itself in readiness to fuse with at a time when this fraction did not represent a real communist current, but a "maximalist" tendency, which for opportunist reasons preferred affiliation to the Third International, than an accord with Turati.

This type of politics marked a grave revision of that which the Bolsheviks and Lenin applied in the formation of the Russian Communist Party itself, and which was before and during the War of 1914-1918, a struggle and an uncompromising delimitation of the fraction against the centrist conciliators and the opportunism of the Right within Social Democracy.

The Italian Communist Party made solid protest against this type of politics of the Comintern. At the Moscow Congress of 1921, at an enlarged executive meeting of June 1922, and at the Fourth Congress of November, 1922, it defended on this question the positions in the theses adopted at its second national Congress in Rome which concluded with: "One must consider as an entirely abnormal procedure, the affiliation of other Parties or fractions of parties. A group which has up to a certain moment a different program and independent organization, are not elements able to be assimilated ultimately. It alters the solidity of the political position and internal structure of the Party. In this case, the augmenting of such forces far from corresponding to an increase of effective forces, reduces the capacity of the Party, and paralyzes its work of winning the masses, instead of facilitating it. It is desirable to affirm as rapidly as possible that it is impermissible within Communist World Organization to liquidate the two fundamental principles of organization: it is impossible to have in each country a communist party and another one adhering to the Communist International, except by the road of individual adherence to the Communist Party of the given country".

But the politics of the Second Congress of the Communist Party of Italy diverged also from the

tactics supported by the Comintern. The Communist Party of Italy rejected the idea of a united anti-fascist front with the other proletarian political groups whose responsibility was too grave in the crisis of the Italian workers' movement and whose treachery was obvious and continuing. The Communist Party of Italy held to the aim of revolutionary mobilization of all the class energies. Besides the redoubling of efforts in the realm of propaganda and organization, the slogan was raised of an alliance of workers of all the union organizations of the class (confederation of Labor and the Railroads), in order to organize a general strike movement able to break the fascist tactic of attacking and cutting down the proletarian forces piecemeal. (I) But neither in one, nor in the other question, did the positions of the Communist Party of Italy win out in the International. From the first, it was forced to bow to the fusion ordered by the Executive Committee of the Communist International: Some time after the arrival of the fascists to power, a few thousands voted for the Third International, which was constituted in the Socialist Party Right Wing, drawing in the Communist Party of Italy. Then, a little after the Congress of Rome in 1923, the leadership of the Left was removed and replaced by the leadership of the Right, who, having been appointed, accepted the theses of the Party Congress of Rome. This signified the defense of the concept of a "mass party", and replaced revolutionary class aims with the aim of the reconquest of bourgeois democracy.

In 1924, however, the leaders of the Communist International proposed a bargain to the Italian Left; to whom it offered the leadership of the Party in Italy and even the politics which the Left defended, on condition that it take no position on the Russian problem, and to solidarize itself with the Communist International in the struggle against Trotsky. As one of the representatives of the Left wrote much later,

(I)- All quotations are taken from the article "The Line of Revolutionary Tradition in the Italian Workers' Movement" in *Battaglia Comunista*, nos. 15, 16, 17.

"the moment had come in which the International broke with the problems proper to it, in putting the Communist Parties in the service of the Soviet State instead of making them an instrument of the International."

It was not necessary to accept the maneuvers adopted by the Comintern, in order to impress the politics of the Left on the Communist Party of Italy, which it already held in opposition to the Executive Committee of the Communist International. It was necessary to know if, in the new situation opened for the Russian and International proletariat there existed a possibility to defend in Italy and in the other countries the fundamental concept which must preside over the development of world revolution. But at that moment in the course of the degeneration of the International "no other voices were raised on the outside resigning posts of leadership. To remain in the leadership of the Party signified the sacrifice of principles over which the Italian and International movement was concerned," and in consequence, "compromised the process of reconstruction of cadres, and the theoretic concepts of the Workers' struggle within the parties of the International."

After its rejection, the Italian Left which always had the majority of the Party, as an election of 1924 revealed, was in fact prohibited from forming fractions, and compelled to be silent, because of its suspension in the Communist International.

In 1926, at the Congress of Lyons (I), and prior to it, Bordiga sounded the alarm on the process of degeneration of the Communist International, pointing out the necessity to continue the work of the Fraction of the Left at the price of a decisive split with the party.

But the Italian workers' movement, finding itself under the oppression of Fascism, was compelled to leave to the political emigration the task of continuing the struggle against opportunism.

In 1927, the year in which the nationalist theory

(I) At Lyons, because of the situation created in Italy by the victory of fascism.



of "socialism in one country" triumphed in the International, the year in which the politics of Stalinism strangled the revolution in China and forced the Chinese Communist Party to enter the bourgeois Kuomintang, and opposed the movement for the formation of Soviets, in that year the emigration of the Italian Left founded the Left Fraction of the Communist Party of Italy, in France at Pantin.

At the time of the founding of the Italian Left Fraction, the opportunists proceeded to expel en masse the left tendencies in all countries, including, in Russia, the leader of the opposition, Trotsky.

The main, primary task appeared to be that of carrying out an international political work aiming to surmount the enormous confusion provoked by this offensive of opportunism in the International, and consequently to stem the dispersion and loss of the revolutionary energies.

But in the same way as the Communist Party of Italy had, in the International, come up against the Russian Communist Party, which really directed that International, so the Italian Left Fraction this time came up against the positions of the Russian opposition and Trotsky himself.

In his estimate of the situation, Trotsky started from the point of view that the maintenance of State property in Russia gave the Soviet State a progressive nature, in spite of the opportunism and nationalism which in 1927 had triumphed within the Communist Party directing that State. Upon that basis, he considered there existed a fundamental antagonism between the workers' state with "collective" property and the capitalist states with private ownership, and it is in terms of this supposed antagonism that he analysed the perspectives.

But in 1927 the working class had already suffered a number of defeats of which the last was that of China, because of the opportunistic policy which Moscow for years had impressed on the International. Trotsky concluded that with its class enemy thus weakened, Imperialism from now on would fatally orient itself in a more or less short period towards a war bloc against the U.S.S.R., whose aim would be the destruction of collective property. His main grievance

against "centrism" (or Stalinism as he liked to call it) was that of having thus prepared on the international arena, the conditions for a violent return of capitalism, and he considered that in face of an attack by the bourgeois armies, "centrism" would be unable to defend the U.S.S.R.

Placing himself thus on a specifically national plane, and with his prejudice about the progressive nature of the State Capitalism established in Russia, Trotsky evaluated wrongly the real state of the working class movement and the political nature of the forces at present. The proof is that shortly before the victory, in Germany, of Hitler, in 1933, to whom the German Communist Party capitulated without the least battle, Trotsky persisted in seeing in this party the key to a revolutionary victory of the German proletariat which would have completely changed the situation. This, in spite of the fact that the opportunism of Moscow had infected not only the German workers' movement, but the whole International as well.

The political tasks which Trotsky proposed to the Communist Left of all countries flowed of course from his theoretical and political analysis.

Because he considered the state property (which he called collective) as progressive and foresaw an inevitable war (i.e. World War II) between the Soviet State and the bourgeois states, the strategic objective which he assigned to the Left was that of defense of the U.S.S.R.

Because he considered Stalinist centrism a "bad defender" of the U.S.S.R., he maintained that in order to reach this objective it was necessary at all costs to reform the Third International.

Finally, as he continued, in spite of all the evidence, to see in "centrism" a proletarian force, on the basis of its fight in the U.S.S.R. against the "Right" for the maintenance of the collective property, Trotsky envisaged the struggle for the reform of the Comintern only within the limits of an "opposition".

The Italian Left had a completely different analysis. It started from the point of view that "the revolutionary role of the Russian State did not flow

from the existence of collective ownership of the means of production, but from the policy which it followed in the national and international spheres". So, it was confirmed that "in 1927 the triumph of 'centrism' closed a period in which capitalism had to face a workers' state and Communist Parties which fought for revolution. It opened another period in which capitalism faces the 'Workers' State and 'Communist' Parties fighting for socialism in one country!"

This means that since that time the general criterion for the analysis of situations is that which places together with the forces of capitalism and its social-democratic agents, the force of "centrism". The victory of the nationalist theory of socialism in one country permitted the change of role of the Russian State itself. It became an obstacle both for the struggle of the Russian proletariat and for the struggle of the International proletariat.

Consequently the Italian Fraction of the Communist Party of Italy rejected the perspective which Trotsky considered inevitable, of a violent attack against the U.S.S.R., and envisaged on the contrary, the strengthening of the links between the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist states without implying that the Statified property would necessarily be overthrown.

It is moreover, verified after the victory of Hitler in Germany. Italian Left Communism was enabled to say to Trotsky that "it is precisely after the defeat of the world proletariat in Feb. 1933, in Germany that is opened the phase of best relations between the Capitalist States and the Soviet State. The Russian State consolidated its economic positions just at the moment when the world proletariat saw itself thrown back by the offensive of the enemy."

In addition, the Italian Left Fraction saw in an entirely different manner than Trotsky, the tasks of the Left Communists in all the countries; in that concerning objectives and methods as well. For the Left Communists it was a question of saving the Communist movement from the debacle which dragged the International to its dissolution; the Communist parties to betrayal, and the Soviet State into the lap of capitalism, and not of mobilization for the

defense of the U.S.S.R. The path that the Left Communists indicated is the one that Lenin himself followed in face of the War of 1914-1918, under different historic conditions, but facing an identical phenomenon of opportunist corruption of the Social-Democratic parties: this is the path of the Fraction work. The Left Communists understood by this that, starting from the fundamental bases upon which the Communist movement is constituted, the tasks of the Left are not only those of maintaining revolutionary principles against the parties that abandon these principles more and more, but to prepare the subjective conditions for the revival of the Communist class movement by enriching the original program for the historic critique of the experience of the International and the first workers seizure of power.

But whereas on this line the Left Fraction of the Communist Party of Italy presented its positions to the International Congress; the positions upon which the Communist Party of Italy was left isolated in the Comintern, a platform was established corresponding to the new situation, concretized by the rupture of the International with the principle of Internationalism in 1927. Trotsky replied to all the critics of the politics of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (and for whom he was the reporter against us) fought by the Communists of Italy, making his own unconditionally the theses of the first four Congresses of the International. On the other hand, instead of working for the formation of new cadres which was proved necessary by the evolution of the Communist Parties to treachery, Trotsky, on the contrary, broke up these cadres by expelling from the International Opposition all those who did not share his position on the Russian problem.

In this struggle, to which was directly connected the possibilities of maintaining the communist tradition and the reconstruction of the revolutionary movement, the events of 1933 in Germany mark a decisive point. In effect, the rise to power of Nazism in Germany was the victory of the offensive of International Capitalism against the principal fortress of the class struggle in Europe. In addition, after the



whole series of defeats which took place from 1923 on, the proletariat found itself thrown back in a decisive manner. Hitler's victory opened up furthermore, a new course in which the proletariat henceforth was put in a defensive position, while capitalism became more strongly oriented toward the only road possible to it: War. At the same time this victory meant the death of the Third International whose function had been to lead the struggle of the proletariat of all countries toward the insurrectionary victory, and for this reason could not find a path other than the proletarian offensive.

The events also invalidated completely the politics of the Left Opposition of Trotsky which assigned itself as the essential task; to reform that international. Instead of recognizing in the facts of the situation, a grave warning; instead of reexamining the fundamental bases upon which they established their politics, the Left Opposition took no notice. At one stroke, the whole left was disorganized and the "slogan of reform of the International" was replaced by that of "Constitution of new parties and a new International."

A new phase of the struggle opened that the Italian Left Communists conducted against Trotsky and the opposition since 1927. But the principled positions remained respectively the same. Leading always from the position on which it asserted that the Communist movement is unable to survive the victory of opportunism in the International, and the death of which is the condition to bring forth a Marxist interpretation of historic events which were at the root of this victory of opportunism; that it is a necessary condition to go beyond the errors committed, theoretically and politically by this International. Thus the Left Fraction of the Communist Party of Italy opposed the new Trotskyist orientation, as it opposed the politics of reforming the Third International. It put in a clear light the subjective conditions for the formation of new parties. It combatted the false pretension of Trotsky for realizing this on the unchanged basis of the "defense of the U.S.S.R.," and the first four congresses of the Communist International. But

its critique applied equally to the objective conditions requisite for the Communist movement to reconstitute itself in parties effectively influencing the masses; conditions which Trotsky either did not take into account, or else an erroneous analysis of perspectives, would force him to admit the existence of, in the course of the situation. On one hand, the Left established (basing itself on the experience of the Bolshevik fraction) that the road to the formation of the Party was essentially the road of the class struggle under the revolutionary conditions of a proletariat being amenable to regrouping itself around a Marxist program restored against opportunism, and defended up to that point by a minority. On the other hand, it maintained that the existence of revolutionary conditions is not identified with the crisis of the regime (permanent since 1914) but depends equally on the political forces active in the situation and in particular depends on displacing the "Communist" Parties of opportunism with their open treachery and openly declared collaboration with the bourgeoisie. Finally in the domain of perspectives the Left considered that----- both from the point of view of displacing these "Communist" Parties of betrayal and from the purely social point of view - only the second world war was able to create the elements for the reappearance of the revolutionary course.

This new and last phase of the struggle between the Italian Left and Trotskyism for the reconstruction of the Communist movement was closed with a totally negative balance sheet from the International point of view.

In effect, the fraction of the Left, which in 1933 inclined anew to a discussion between the Left groups of different countries for the formation of other fractions, ran up against, again, as it did in 1930, the positions of the Opposition which won out on an International scale.

But for another reason, the self-same Left Opposition did not delay concluding its false analysis, and its opportunist orientation with a new turn, echoing it more loudly than formerly. Assigning itself the

task, in the situation at that time, of searching for the elements to realize its slogan of formation of new parties, it ended up by looking for these elements through joining the social-democratic 2nd International. That is to say, in a current which since 1914 was already eliminated from the proletarian camp by its support of Imperialist War.

This turn to compromised political forces in face of all the defeats suffered by the working class on the morrow after the first World War, for the construction of new parties, signified definitely the death act of the Opposition as a current capable of realizing the construction of new revolutionary parties. From the immediate point of view it signified the debacle of the communist movement (whose future interests are not found in "Stalinist centrism", but in Left Communism) and the isolation of the Italian Left.

In conclusion, if it is not exclusively the political emigration which had the burden of work of the Left Fraction (I) and which had the initiative to found the Internationalist Communist Party of Italy in 1943, it is however, on the basis of the positions it has defended from 1927 to the second World War that the founding of the Party was brought about. It has had, most certainly, much to say about its history and the positions that it defended in face of the diverse events and in particular in face of the tragic experience of 1936-1939 in Spain. But that is beyond the scope of this article. Here we wish to bring out essentially two

facts. (I)

The first, is the continuity and progression theoretically and politically which exists between the Communist Party of Italy of 1921 and the Internationalist Communist Party of 1943 (It is unnecessary at this point, but elsewhere, to dwell at length on the idea that the present Italian Communist Party affirms patriotism and the union of classes, replacing the program of the dictatorship of the proletariat with that of the democratic republic, and finally practicing governmental collaboration. It has no reason any longer to recall the split by which they separated themselves from the reformists at Leghorn in 1921. Besides it denies openly "splitting politics" in recalling the fusion with the Italian Socialist Party as a "measure" of the "unity" and "power" of the working class.)

The second fact which in the international situation in which we find ourselves, is of particular interest to us, is the absolutely unique place occupied by the Italian Left Communists in the development of the Left Communist International, understood in a larger sense and also most loose. Let us

(I) It is convenient to recall at this point that the Italian Left abandoned the name, "Left Fraction of the Communist Party of Italy" for that of "Italian Fraction of the Left Communist International," at its congress of 1935. This was necessitated by the fact, contrary to its expectations, of the open treachery of the opportunist Communist International to the proletariat, which did not wait for the eruption of the second World War. 1935 was exactly the year in which in connection with the definitive "reconciliation of the U.S.S.R. with Imperialism (marked exactly by its entry into the League of Nations and the Stalin - Laval agreement) the Communist Party of France declared open support to the Bourgeois government (then led by Laval). The change of name marked at the time the taking of a position in relation to this "turn" of the officials of the Communist Party, and the fact that the objective conditions do not always permit the formation of new parties.

leave aside here the "Council Communist" tendency of Holland, because it has always been outside of Leninism on the essential conception of the need for the Revolutionary Party of the Working Class.

There remain two international currents which claim to be Internationalist Communism: the Trotskyite current represented by the official sections of the 4th International, but also by a list of dissidents who, while refusing to be assimilated by Trotskyism, connect themselves to it by maintaining their position of defense of the U.S.S.R., as well as by the fact that they support the Trotskyist orientation for the for the formation of new parties since the death of the 3rd International; and the genuine internationalist current of the Italian Left Communists represented by the Internationalist Communist Party of Italy and by forces extremely small found in the French, Belgian, and American Fractions of the Left Communist International.

Today Trotskyism has in different Countries a certain notoriety from which it profits in order to pass itself off as the only authentic continuator of Leninism. But in reality this contention is in formal contradiction with the facts: Whether in regard to the Imperialist War, in which their attachment to that which is, by all the evidence, Russian Imperialism, compromises Trotskyism and will compromise it again; whether in regard to the nationalist maquis (French nationalist resistance movement), which it supported with the characterization of "proletarian anti-fascism;" whether in regard to the class struggle in general where it tail-ends the left bourgeoisie (prophet of state-capitalist measures of nationalization and of bourgeois reconstruction), Trotskyism consists only of an "I can do it better" program with reformist content. It supports even this left bourgeoisie going to the extent of proposing as an objective of the proletariat, its exclusive representation in bourgeois government (i.e. Trotskyism proposes a Labor Party, workers and farmers government in the U.S.; supports British Labor Party Government; proposes a

Socialist-Stalinist government for France, a Blum-Cachin regime.) Finally, in all situations and under all aspects, Trotskyism appears clearly, not as the embryo of a new International Communist Movement, but appears as a remnant of the old, a dissident movement of Stalinism.

With regard to us, we are convinced that a movement deserving of the name, Communist and Internationalist cannot be born on the basis of "notoriety" more or less noisy, but on a coherent ensemble of principles and tactical conceptions, on a merciless and complete historic critique of Fascism and the counter-revolution in Russia. That is why we are convinced that we must struggle independently for the triumph of the fundamental positions expressed in the political platform of the Left Communist International.

## THE CONDITIONS FOR THE FORMATION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY OF THE WORKING CLASS

The Congress of our Italian Comrades was held in Florence at the beginning of May, 1948. It concluded with resolutions dealing with the union fractions and the Italian elections. The Congress decided not to participate any longer in these elections as long as the question remains unclarified within the Party. Finally, the Congress adopted a simple resolution of general significance. It consists of a declaration of fidelity to the basic principles of our movement. Here we present the text of the resolution and will attempt to put forth our opinion on the subject.

"The first National Congress, after ample discussion of the arguments raised in the course of debate regarding the evolution of the Capitalist Regime and the tactics of the Revolutionary Party of the Working Class, urged the leading committees, within its midst, to resolve these questions according to the line established by the 16 points of the Theses on the Tasks of the Party, contained in the political report of the executive committee."

This is much and little at the same time.

It is much in the sense that it seems till now, proven, that the present reactionary conditions permit the existence of a revolutionary political organization of the working class that does not fall into the opportunism of the defense of bourgeois democracy of the Eastern or Western brand, or into the opportunism of the transitional slogans which lead to the defense of bourgeois democracy.

It is little, in the sense, it seems the comrades have not posed in all its clarity the problem of the formation of the Revolutionary Party under present conditions.

I think it would be useless to dwell on the correctness of the perspectives traced, nor above all, to conceal the fact that there exists among us an important section of the comrades who thought that a revolutionary period was opened in Italy three years ago. These comrades were mistaken. There is no humiliation in admitting this,

because material facts must be respected by materialists.

If one looks back, it is certain that as far as our central positions are concerned, they were not in error. We were correct when we said that the occupation of territory by the Russians did not signify victory of world revolution, or of socialism, but, on the contrary, were the taking of positions by Imperialist armies for a new war. We were correct when we said that the support by the workers to the anti-German resistance (Italian Partisans, French Maquis, etc.) in reality disarmed the workers in the face of the democratic state of the Bourgeoisie. We were correct when we said the democratic states were evolving toward totalitarianism of the fascist type. We were correct when we said that the nationalizations effected by the various democratic states do not constitute a step toward socialism, but make possible a greater exploitation of the working class. We were correct when we said the "factory councils" (tied to a national program of reconstruction) tie the workers, in reality, to the reconstruction of the economic apparatus of the bourgeoisie. Finally, we were correct when we denounced the illusion of a reconstruction of this apparatus for a "civil" production of abundance, and affirmed on the contrary that the economy of war is the only lasting outlet for production under capitalism.

But all these questions upon which we were correct, take nothing away from the fact that although we had a correct world historic perspective, we have not been capable of translating this perspective into terms of an evaluation of situations immediately facing us. Personally, for example when I completed, with the phrase, in 1941, a critical report on the economy of war; "after the economy of war, the war economy begins again"; reconversion to peace economies seemed to me then and now excluded as impossible. For the present such errors are not fatal. But in the phase of mass action of the revolutionary party of the working class they could become fatal. The comrades who follow us today possess by themselves class con-

sciousness. For them the secondary errors that we may make are outweighed by their own confidence in the historic destiny of the proletariat. In that phase of action of the revolutionary party when it addresses itself to masses of workers who have confidence only in movements which are visible and directly controllable, the least error is paid for by a very high price. It is useless without doubt to recall that the bankruptcy of the 3rd International had its beginning exactly in the years 1921-1922, after a wrong appraisal of the situations of that moment, as well as wrong measures to cope with them, even though the historic perspective of the Communist International was correct; thus proving the looseness of beginning with 1923.

It is therefore necessary to have an exact appraisal of situations. Also, it is necessary that the comrades who profess different opinions on tactics must justify their position by an exact evaluation of the contingent situation.

There are two tendencies in the Italian Party. It is remarkable that neither of the two reach the point of defining themselves in a clear manner. This is because neither of the two tendencies reach that point in their argumentations which would bring out anything characteristically new in the present situation of capitalism. This lack of clarity is such that most of the comrades denied the existence of two tendencies. Since 1943, there is nothing new in the situation confronting the Left Communist. For example, there are at home (in Belgium) comrades who think that a revolutionary perspective was opened in 1943 by the strikes (which was the signal for the decline of Mussolini). But these comrades have never fallen into the opportunist trap of believing that the moment has come to issue the slogans of battle in order to conquer the great masses and lead the class struggle to the assault on the State.

In my opinion, we are facing a new situation, which never existed before in the history of the revolutionary movement. We have as yet not understood this situation. Its characteristics must be described and defined in order to extract a political line of conduct summed up in the form of the theses

on action. Only a powerful class instinct, developed by the long ingrained habit of ours to oppose the proletarian position to all the opportunist deviations, reformist and democratic; only this class instinct is our guide up to this point, without having the possibility of basing this action on an analysis, tracing as probable perspective the real content of the actual situation.

What information will mark with precision the content and characteristics of this new situation? A situation at present unfolding in Italy and to a lesser degree unfolding in France.

a) The general situation of Italian Capitalism is marked (by the same cause as that of the other capitalist countries) by the evolution toward war by the integration of Italy in the American bloc. Neither of the two tendencies deny this reality.

b) This evolution toward war should exclude the possibility of the strengthening of an organization which (such as ours) agitates on the basis of a program of opposition to the two blocs (Russian and American) and opposes to the war, the slogan of revolutionary defeatism. The dilemma of the capitalists, war-revolution excludes in fact the possibility of such a situation. Before 1939 we saw that the process of preparation of the war was possible only on condition that the workers forces were completely integrated into the ideological front of the war. It seems that it is the same this time. Now, the fact is, our party received 12,000 votes in the last election, as against 3,000 in 1946 in the region of Milan alone. The meetings organized by our comrades have an attendance of 1,000 to 3,000. Last May, 1948 they organized a meeting in Milan with an attendance of 10,000 (the optimistic say 15,000). On the other hand, our comrades have formed in many big factories, the union fractions which are the action groups for our demands, agitating in opposition to the program of reconstruction of the bourgeoisie. In each case, results have been accomplished without any concession to nationalism, bourgeois reconstruction, to anti-Stalinism or pro-Stalinism, but always on the basis of exposing the

identical character of Russian capitalism and American capitalism and their identical evolution toward Imperialist war. Two other factors, however, mark an indice of our weakness; it is (a) the circulation of our newspaper; in effect an average of 5 newspapers sold by each member. (b) The great turnover of members which is already double the present membership.

I think we find ourselves facing a new situation. The basic criteria which guided us in the past was founded on an historic alternative conditioning the forces of the vanguard. Either the situation would evolve toward war, and carry with it the disassociation from, and disappearance of all proletarian consciousness, and the reduction of the vanguard to the skeleton organization of the Fraction; or else the situation would evolve toward revolution and carry with it the growth of the Fraction, its transformation into a party, and the guiding of the class struggle to the assault on the State by the Party. I think today this perspective is supplemented by another factor; which is the totalitarian intervention of the State in the economic domain.

There is no other method, but the Marxist one in which to pose the problem of the formation of the Revolutionary Party. That is to say, to place it in the frame of the present class situation and in the continuation of the criteria on which the problem is posed. There are many "Marxists" who are incapable of considering the matter from a historic point of view; many "Marxists" who are incapable of applying the dialectics; many "Marxists" who are incapable of remembering the class nature of the national state. Such "applications of Marxism" lead to reformism, Stalinism, Trotskyism; to the support of the Spanish democracy of assassins of the Asturian miners; to Nationalist resistance. One is unable to escape falling onto their level unless we place the problem of the party on its true basis. In order to put the problem clearly, it is necessary to start with the criteria of classes considered dialectically in their historic progression. For that, it is necessary to recall at first how the problem posed itself at the beginning of the

century; then of the formation of the Bolshevik party, in the period of imperialist expansion toward the colonies and the functioning of liberal Bourgeois type of government. It is necessary, following this, to consider how the problem posed itself after the failure of the Third International, with the reduction progressively of the class political forces to the microscopic scale of Fractions in the course of an evolution parallel and inverse of capital toward the totalitarianism, mitigated in the period between the two wars. It is finally necessary to consider it with reference to the present situation, in which it seems there is a possibility of the growth of the Fractions (in spite of the totalitarian type of functioning which is being more and more accentuated under capitalism and the establishment of blocs of nations evolving toward war) in order to examine if this growth of Fractions is possible on a class basis and what the significance of that growth is.

#### The Formation of the Party in the Rising Period of Capitalism

It is necessary to establish two elements which are intimately connected, and which directly touch the problem of the formation of the party.

The first of these elements is that at the moment of the foundation of the Bolshevik party, the end of colonial wars marked the summit of the rising period of capitalism. The economic crisis of 1913 marked the beginning of its decline. Since that time the situations are pointed toward the double alternative of imperialist war or proletarian revolution.

The second of these elements is that the beginning of the century saw the parallel formation of the first great mass organizations of the working class.

- a) The bourgeoisie is unable any longer to undertake war or "peace" without the concurrence of the mass organizations in which the workers are grouped.
- b) The revolutionary groups in general and the Bol-



sheviks in particular address themselves to a working class which begins to organize itself en masse, but which presented as yet, very vast regions where the workers were politically backward.

It is this degree of organization of the working class that posed the problem of the formation of the revolutionary party at the beginning of the century. Yet it did not only depend on these factors. It was connected with the introduction in the midst of capitalist society, of a situation of a particular type.

The Bolsheviks attacked the "economists", and reformists' postulate that the formation of the class party could not take place on the basis of grouping the workers on the foundation of a program. That is, the Bolsheviks attacked the false concept that the "organization is everything, the program nothing." The Bolsheviks claimed that it is possible to speak of the revolutionary party only in the degree to which the workers gather together on the base of a political program, representing the historic, anti-national and revolutionary interests of the proletarian class.

They likewise established that the formation of the party could not take place at any time, place, or moment. The possibility of establishing the class party requires the introduction of a crisis in the midst of capitalist society. The Bolshevik party itself was established in the development of the rising wave resulting from the strikes of 1896-1898 and ending in the general strike of 1905.

It is the development of such a period of struggle which is the base of the birth and the growth of the Revolutionary Party of the Working Class. It is such a period, as well, which permits the posing of the problem of the seizure of power, not only in theory, but also in fact.

It is necessary to define the characteristics of such a period in order to understand the fundamentals of the formation of the party and the seizure of power first; in order to look for in the next place whether the period of totalitarianism does not require corrections to our present evaluations.

This social crisis of capitalist society had its roots in the lack of equilibrium between production and consumption. In proportion as this lack of equilibrium increased, greater and greater numbers of workers went on strike. The development of such a period does not develop a constantly ascending line of march. It presents a fluctuating development, with some high points and low, of ebb and flow, which are united in a generally ascending line of march leading itself toward the revolution.

In the measure in which this crisis was aggravated, or in other words, to the degree in which the capitalist class was unable to take measures to relieve this lack of equilibrium between production and consumption, to that degree the chain of strikes expanded and lead at a given moment to a general strike. Rosa Luxembourg was the first to describe such a period in an organized manner in her book, "General Strike, Party, and Unions". Trotsky, a little later in, "1905".

At the moment the general strike situation begins, and the bourgeois authorities become incapable of taking measures to restore the operation of its economic system in a decisive manner, there then opens a period of crisis, of the failure of the Capitalist State. Finally, in the measure in which this failure is aggravated, arises spontaneously, the organs of proletarian administration; (factory councils, soldiers and sailors councils, district councils), which take over the functions that the State is no longer capable of fulfilling.

All strike periods have not evolved to the stage of the failure of the State. And all the strike periods which have reached this stage have not given rise to an appearance of these councils, to an equal degree, in the three sectors of the proletarian administration of the factories, districts, and armed forces. The scale on which appear these organs of proletarian administration depends on the degree of the capitalist crisis, on the degree of the failure of the Capitalist State. Nevertheless, it is still true that this is the correct pattern of factors which permit the formation of the Revolutionary Party of

the Working Class. It is the introduction within capitalist society of a period of crisis, which limited at first to the economic domain, degenerates into a social crisis and brings about the failure of the Capitalist State, when it is incapable of getting out of this crisis, and results spontaneously in the creation of the organs of social administration by the working class.

It is at this point, that is emphasized especially, the organic necessity for the Revolutionary Party of the Working Class. The logical conclusion reached from the failure of the Capitalist State and the appearance of councils would be the triumph of the revolution. But the Bolsheviks, by contrast, understood that this failure of the Capitalist State might not be final. If the State finds new methods of administration and carries on the process of production, it may get out of the crisis. And in the degree to which it extricates itself from the crisis, the councils disappear because their basis of existence ceases to be the will of the workers, but the historic crisis of the State alone.

The seizure of power becomes possible only when the proletariat leads, on the basis of the councils, the assault against the National State for its final destruction. This assault, in turn, is possible only when a party spreads within the working masses the program of the International. Only the spreading of this program, creating within the working masses in motion, an anti-national ideology, will permit the assault against this State. All other programs are nothing else but Nationalist. The realization of these programs bring about the reestablishment and reenforcement of the central organism which incarnates them, that is, the National State. Consequently, the first condition necessary for the assault on the State on the basis of councils is the formation of the Revolutionary Party of the Working Class, in the course of development leading to the failure of the State, and the spreading of the Internationalist program by this party of the working class. Such is the profound significance of revolutionary events; their profound historic base;

the possibilities that they contain and the tasks they demand.

Yet, it is impossible to understand these events unless the sharp weapon of the Marxist critique is used. Only the Revolutionary Party of the Working Class presents under such conditions the element of consciousness which understands the significance of events, and intervenes in order to orient them toward the revolutionary victory. The mass of workers, by contrast, do not enter the struggle because of an operation of the "Spirit," becoming all of a sudden internationalist and revolutionary. No, they enter the struggle because of the lack of equilibrium between production and consumption and (in the sharp phase of the crisis) the almost complete breakdown of production, reducing their standard of living in a drastic manner. The Party then plays the role of an element of consciousness, explaining to the workers the meaning of the events; which introduces the working class to Socialism, and draws the working class to it on the basis of the Internationalist program, toward the assault against the State.

Likewise, it is correct to state as certain comrades of the Left Communist movement say, "in reality the Bolshevik Party was founded in 1917"; that is to say, only when the situation opens up in order to lead the assault against the State does the proletariat act as an independent class, called to establish Socialism. But this risks becoming a simple literary formula, if one neglects the historic process leading to the formation of the cadres of the Revolutionary Party of the Working Class.

The direct action of the party for the seizure of power is one thing. The formation of cadres of the party is another. In the conditions of the historic crisis of liberalism these two were connected; when there opened within the working class the condition for forming the cadres of the party, the situation evolved at the same time organically toward the failure of the State.

It would be incorrect to wish to create the cadres of the revolutionary party without the historic conditions to form them existing within the working

class. But it would also be incorrect to pretend that it is only when the assault against the State becomes a direct possibility, that then the moment arrives for the formation of cadres of the party. The formation of these cadres does not depend finally on a blue-printed program traced in advance and in detail according to a pre-established plan. The cadres are formed when the conditions to form them appear within the working class. This formation was (in the rising period of capitalism) intimately connected with the introduction of a crisis within capitalist society; a crisis which degenerated into the process of the failure of the Capitalist State which, in its turn, opened up the possibility of the assault against the National State; for its destruction and for the triumph of the International.

The Cadres of the Bolshevik Party were organized in the form of a fraction during 1896-1898; since 1903, in the form of a party leading the class struggle on a local scale.

The historic base of the formation of the cadres of the party (of the external work of the fractions) was the meeting of limited class forces on a revolutionary program, at the time of the reduction of the standard of living of the masses, evolving toward the revolutionary crisis.

The historic base of the assault on power was the guidance of the class struggle by the Party at the moment of the collapse of the State.

Under the conditions of liberalism these two are intimately connected because the State, unarmed against the crisis (which naturally brings about the reduction of the living standards of the masses) leads at the same time, in an organic manner toward the general strike and the failure of the State.

#### The Formation of the Revolutionary Party After the Failure of the 3rd International

The causes for the failure of the Third International are understood sufficiently. We know how the Communist Parties of the world took a nationalist

course, to the point of the false tactic of "anti-fascism", which was in reality the defense of the national state of the democratic bourgeoisie. Soviet Russia, on its part, was the theatre of a gradual transformation away from the workers' power that grew out of the events of 1917. The general political orientation, in Russia and the world, toward nationalism (socialism in one country) could have no other effect than the victory of the national state of the bourgeoisie. But the revolutionary events begin precisely with the process of the failure of this State in a profound economic crisis.

Up to 1922-1923, the whole Communist movement based its action on the opening up of a situation leading organically to the failure of the national state. All its tactics, consequently, were designed to accelerate this failure in order to give the final blow to the national state at the decisive moment of the crisis. In 1922-1923, this was exactly the opposite. The nationalist or democratic political orientation cannot have any other practical aim other than to rescue the organism which incarnates the nationalist or democratic program, that is to say, the National State. Consequently, in the events in Italy and Germany of 1923, China 1927, France and Spain 1936, the workers were thrown into the struggle by a wave leading organically to the collapse of the State. But they were, politically, engaged in an opposite current, consolidation, defense and reenforcement of this State, under the pretext of "anti-fascism".

In the period from 1923-1939 we defended the idea (against Trotskyism) that the failure of the 3rd International and the parallel evolution of capitalist society had introduced new factors in the problem of the formation of the revolutionary party.

Trotskyism continues to base itself only on the introduction of a crisis within capitalist society and does not take account of the new conditions of which this crisis is produced. Result: they formed the Trotskyite International in 1938, not in a period of mounting revolution, but in a period of the complete integration of the workers into the war

front, under the false line of a struggle between fascism and anti-fascism.

The new elements we think disclosed on the problem of the formation of the Revolutionary Party are the following:-

1) The mass organizations born at the beginning of the century, on a big scale, were completely integrated into the nationalist program. The majority of workers thought that nationalization established by the national state was a step toward socialism.

2) Stalinism was not considered by us as a phenomenon based on an "error" of militant workers (as the Trotskyites pretend). We considered it as a current, an historic reality, which performed the function proper of bourgeois parties in the new conditions of capitalist decadence in Russia and the world.

3) These new conditions of bourgeois government over the working class were revealed for the first time in an empirical manner by the policy of "economic democracy" of the Weimar Republic. The distinctive characteristic of these new conditions is that (in contrast to the liberal period) the State intervenes henceforth in the social domain in a totalitarian form. It binds together the social activities in order to lead them to realize one aim. This goal, was, in Germany, the reconstruction of the economic apparatus of the bourgeoisie.

In the period of decay, capitalism no longer finds the means for its survival, in the immediate relief of the conditions of life of the working class. Their conditions of life are debased more and more. It is able to live only on the basis of a continued reduction of their standard of living. Consequently, it is only in the domain of ideas that capitalism finds the means to cement its society. The bourgeoisie cements its undermined, decadent system, by drawing the workers into activities, ideologies, and legislation, which are presented as the realization of socialism.

As a result, we have defended against Trotskyism, the following position: empty talk on socialism is not an index of the struggle against the bourgeoisie. Empty talk on socialism becomes the index of a revo-

lutionary struggle only when it is bound up with a program of subversion of the national state. If this talk on Socialism is, on the contrary, connected with a national-democratic program, its practical realization can have as its executive agent, only the national state. In that case, the phrase, "socialist," cannot serve to mobilize the workers against capitalism, which is incarnated more and more in the State. The phrase "socialist," in that case, serves on the contrary, the means whereby capital mobilizes the workers to carry on the support of the national state which is the organizer of their misery.

It is therefore around the problem of the national state that the problem of the formation of the Revolutionary Party gravitates more and more.

Under the conditions of liberalism, the formation of the Revolutionary Party is connected with the opening of a crisis which leads organically to the failure of the State.

Under the conditions of the evolution toward totalitarianism in the years 1923-1939, this factor persists. But to it is joined something new. It is this: the great majority of workers act henceforth on the basis of a nationalist program, which orients their struggle not against the State, but for its benefit. The conditions for the formation of the Revolutionary Party, does not depend therefore uniquely on this crisis orienting itself organically toward the failure of the State. What is demanded is more of that work of clarification within the working class; the elimination of nationalist ideologies, opening the way for recruitment at first, then the mass action, then the New Revolutionary Party at the time of such a crisis.

The totalitarian intervention of the State into the economic, political and social sectors, has on the other hand profoundly upset the process by which this revolutionary crisis appears. This is what Trotskyism has never been capable of understanding. In order to understand the new conditions under which a revolutionary crisis is introduced (therefore, the formation and the action of the revolutionary party) it is necessary to define the methods of intervention of the State, and its position in relation to the whole of society

and its crisis, in the conditions of decadent, totalitarian capitalism.

The mode of movement of decay capitalism is the following:-

A- It presents a fixed objective to the masses. This objective is sometimes presented as political slogans to be realized (In Germany in the years 1923-1933, the realization of the "democratic economy"; after 1933, the realization of a Greater Germany). It is sometimes presented as an economic objective (In Russia, the 5 year plans; in "democratic" countries the "reconstruction" after 1944, then the Marshall Plan). But in one case, as in the other, the goal of capital is to involve the workers in the aims of capitalist production (which was in Germany before 1933, reconstruction; after 1933, the war economy).

B- The means by which the workers are attached to this economic process consists in agitating them: politically, on the basis of a national program; socially, on the basis of labor-management collaboration through labor-management committees; economically, in order for the workers to accept a reduction in their standard of living. Political action on a nationalist program implies acceptance by the workers of measures of State. Therefore, the workers being the agent for the carrying out of Statism, accept in practice the organization of their misery. They disarm themselves completely and voluntarily in face of the instrument assigned to organize their misery: the National State. Thus the workers are disarmed politically in face of the State. The realization of this objective leads to the following stage: the impotence of the workers in face of the State (In Germany in face of Nazism).

Social action on the basis of labor-management committees (labor-management collaboration connected to a nationalist program) puts the workers in the position of facilitating capitalist production internally. Oriented toward collaboration with capital on industry-wide scale, the workers are unable to go politically toward the destruction of capitalism, as long as this collaboration continues. In this sector as well, the workers are disarmed politically in face of the national state.

These two orientations of the workers (on the two-fold plan of social and political action) make them impotent in the field of economic demands. Through their political orientation, national and social collaboration, is fulfilled the conditions for the functioning of decay capitalism: the reduction of the standard of living of the masses.

C) The position of the national state in relation to the crisis is profoundly shaken. In the liberalist period, the hour of the proletarian revolution sounds at the time the economic crisis degenerates into the social crisis and begins the downfall of the State. Under these conditions of decay, the bourgeoisie understands the danger. The State is henceforth better armed against the crisis and their revolutionary development. The only way, which is the Marxist one, to understand the problem is to set it in its historic progression.

In 1905 and in 1917-1923 the social crisis degenerated into the crisis of the State. It was not prepared or able to combat this development. In 1923 the policy of democratic economy in Germany and Fascism in Italy appeared the means for the State, not only to combat the revolutionary development of the social crisis, but to paralyze the social crisis produced by itself. The political, economic and social means have thus been sharply and summarily brought to light. It consists of the recruitment of the workers to the realization of one aim, presented as a goal to be attained.

The orientation of the workers to carry out 5 year plans; the democratic economy; the Greater Germany, the Popular Front; the reconstruction; the Marshall Plan; such is the mode of movement of decay capitalism.

Capital finds the method to get its economic apparatus going; it finds the means to arrest the crisis it produces in taking recourse to a new type of capital accumulation, the accumulation of decay capitalism. Essentially it consists of the financing of the economy by the State, involving the reduction of the standard of living of the masses. The first application of decadent accumulation after the revolutionary events of 1917-1923 was the reconstruction of the



economic apparatus of the German Bourgeoisie. It was financed partly by the German State, partly by the Dawes and Young Plans. When this reconstruction reached its limited objectives, there opened anew, in Germany as in the world, a period of crisis; the stagnation of the economic apparatus.

The profound significance of Nazism in Germany consists in this:- It is this (the stagnation of production foreshadowing the probability of great social struggles) the bourgeoisie took the lead to forestall the crisis. It created a political movement which drew in the workers and tied them to the one goal permitted by the bourgeoisie to remain: war economy, succeeding the period of reconstruction.

Thus the State intervenes in the social body in 1923 in order to struggle victoriously against the revolutionary events; in 1933, to prevent the economic stagnation from degenerating into great social struggles that could develop revolutionary struggles. Thus, in 1933 in relation to 1923, we see distinctly, a progressive mastery by the bourgeoisie over its own economic system. In the phase of decay this mastery is accentuated: the bourgeoisie and its State in 1944-1945 did not wait at all for the economic stagnation to resolve itself; even before the end of large scale war production, they took measures of rapid reconversion of the economic apparatus, in order to stop the activity leading to social struggles. In the same manner, in the autumn of 1946, the imminence of an economic crisis in the United States was victoriously combatted by the American Bourgeoisie through the economic activity financed by the State and placed under the sign of the Marshall Plan. Finally, that which is at this writing, only beginning, (May-June 1948) the forestalling, by the bourgeoisie of America, of the low-state of its finances, by investing billions of dollars in the economy of war.

This evolution of State intervention does not signify that the bourgeoisie has entered the era of economic freedom, following the era of economic stagnation. Today, as yesterday the crumbling of its system is recorded in the series of social situations leading toward the victory of socialism.

But this as yet does not take place because of the fact that the bourgeoisie is victoriously passing from the liberalist stage to the stage of State Capitalism. The problem of its disintegration is connected in the liberalist period to the objective limits of capital accumulation in that period. It reached its objective limits with the end of colonial wars (expansion of Imperialism toward the colonies), and the crisis of 1913, and opened into the revolutionary wave of 1917-1923.

Today, the problem of the disintegration of the bourgeoisie opens up the possibility of the revolutionary assault against the State (at the stage of state capitalism) and is connected to the objective limits of capital accumulation in the decay stage, in the period of the financing of the economy by the State.

#### Historic Position of the Problem in Relation to the Crisis of Capitalism

The general historic perspective, conditioning the formation of the Revolutionary Party is therefore profoundly upset by the relationship to liberalism.

In the liberalist epoch, the hour of the proletarian revolution sounds when the economic crisis degenerates into a social crisis and brings about the failure of the State. In the epoch of state capitalism, the hour of the proletarian revolution sounds when the State crumbles because of its inability to arrest the crisis it produces at the moment in which is reached the objective limits of decadent accumulation of capital.

In the liberalist epoch, the failure of the State appears at the end of a revolutionary wave. In the epoch of State Capitalism the failure of the State appears at the beginning of a revolutionary period.

It is necessary at the same time to take into account the parallel evolution taking place not only in relation to the State with an economic crisis, but in the relationships between States. The totalitarian evolution of capitalist society on the national arena



is paralleled by the totalitarian evolution on the International arena.

The principle of independence of the national bourgeoisies, in the whole of its social activities, throughout the various countries, is abandoned to a greater and greater degree. In any of the blocs of nations, the ensemble of economies function as the particular interests of the nation which occupies a dominant position in the bloc. This is so with the Russian bloc and the American bloc.

The situation that unfolded in Italy in 1943 serves to prove these assertions. The strikes in March 1943, indicated that the fascist political personnel was unable to arrest the crisis it produced. The revolutionary crisis of 1917 in Russia presents sufficiently enough the same aspects of the appearance of the crisis. In the Italian framework in 1943, the financing of the economy by the Italian State was no longer possible. The apparatus of production was almost unable to function. Capital accumulation in decay capitalism attained its objective limits in the framework of the Italian State. Even though the Italian situation of 1943 did not give birth to revolutionary events, it could serve as a valuable example.

The maintenance of capitalist enterprise over Italian society, after 1943, was possible in major part because of the presence of foreign troops, and the most powerful State intervention into the financing of the economy. Therefore the unsteady relief, economically, injected into Italy in 1947-1948, did not contradict the fact that decadent capital accumulation financed by the Italian State reached its objective limits in 1943. This is so, because the economic relief in 1947-1948 depended essentially on American intervention in the form of loans, followed by the Marshall Plan.

But these two factors (the presence of foreign troops and the more powerful State intervention into the financing of the economy) does not hide the fundamental element revealed by the Italian crisis of 1943: the impossibility for the State to continue the decadent capital accumulation does not automatically bring about a revolutionary wave. Even when the State

is on the point of crumbling, capital still has possibilities. These possibilities are found essentially in the political sector. Thus, in March 1943, the Italian bourgeoisie developed a new orientation and a new political personnel: democratic, this time. It is the acceptance by the workers of this new bourgeois political orientation which presents, in the phase of the toughening-up of the State at the moment of crisis of the State-directed economy, the base for a new step in the survival of the bourgeoisie. Since the program accepted and supported by the workers is not internationalist, it is unable, in effect, to do anything else but concentrate itself around the National State, which guides the masses toward its support. At best, under present conditions, the non-internationalist program only realizes the neutrality of the workers toward the National State.

Thus, even if there is a growing crisis of the State-directed economy, and the State crumbles, it does not signify necessarily a victory in the immediate sense, of the working class and Socialism. Just as the failure of the State at the time of the historic crisis of 1922-1923 in Germany and Italy was victoriously overcome by the bourgeoisie. Since then the bourgeoisie has found new means of government over the working class (labor-management committees, and demagogy on the construction of socialism). The crisis of the future may also reveal to the bourgeoisie new means of government adapted to the phase of state capitalism. Even without finding new means, capital is able to survive and begin a new period, at first orienting the workers politically on a nationalist program, assuring their neutrality and impotence in face of the State. This condition fulfilled, followed by finding the means of deepening decadent capital accumulation, for example, by upsetting the relationship of forces within its own class; by liquidating en masse the middle class; by liquidating bourgeois competitors; by having recourse to nationalization and total planning of the permanent police type as in Russia.

The crumbling of the State at the time of the mounting crisis of the directed economy cannot there-

fore become the point of departure for the revolutionary struggles unless in this situation there exist the political forces capable of carrying socialism into the working class at the time the crumbling of the State takes place.

Even if all these conditions are fulfilled; if socialism is carried into the working class at the time of the crisis of the State, and the Revolutionary Party effects the transformation of the propaganda of the type during 1943-1945 in Italy, into revolutionary action, this has significance, only if it is considered in the framework of world capitalism. Its historic possibilities are fundamentally different depending on whether it is produced in a satellite country of a bloc of nations, or in the dominant country of a bloc of nations. The margin of security of capitalism in general is determined by the margin of security and the possibilities of the functioning of the system in the dominant countries of blocs of nations at present.

The dominant countries are therefore able to determine in any bloc of nations, the situations of misery; of stagnation; or breakdown of production within the satellite nations. This does not affect the accuracy of what has been said above. We should not jump to the conclusion, therefore, that these events have influence on capitalism in general. If a revolutionary situation should emerge from the satellite countries they could only have the meaning of fringe struggles, or skirmishes, incapable by themselves of shaking the system in its entirety.

The general historic perspective for the formation of the revolutionary class party is therefore profoundly upset compared to the era of liberalism.

In the liberalist epoch, the hour of the proletarian revolution sounds at the time the economic crisis degenerates into the social crisis-and involves the failure of the State. In the epoch of State intervention the hour of the proletarian revolution sounds also when the state collapses because of the impossibility of stopping the continuing economic crisis; at the moment when the objective limits of decadent capital accumulation is reached. (While the hour of proletarian revolution sounds in both epochs

when the State is in collapse, in the period of State capitalism, social, economic, and political crisis are simultaneous).

In the liberalist epoch, the bankruptcy of the state appears at the end of a revolutionary period. In the epoch of State Capitalism, the bankruptcy of the State appears at the beginning of the revolutionary period.

But the fact should not be lost sight of that behind the apparent solidity of the capitalist regime is produced the slow process of internal disintegration. The correct analysis of this internal process is of the greatest importance for posing the problem of the formation of party cadres in the period of decay capitalism.

The actual state of Marxist analysis permits us to say that the objective limits of decadent capital accumulation is intimately connected to the general political position of the working class. Decadent capital accumulation (financing of the economy by the state) depends in fact on the degree of stability of such a state; of the control that state exercises over the whole of society. This control (this stability) depends in its turn on the degree to which the State is supported by the working class.

Thus, the whole revolutionary question and the problem of the formation of the Revolutionary Party is resolved into two poles: 1)-the stability of the national state; 2)- the degree of support by the workers of such a state.

In-as-much as the revolutionary problem is profoundly affected because of the changed position of the State in relation to the economic crisis, two factors from 1940-1944 on, begin to modify the workers' attitude toward the state.

- 1- The circumstances which push the workers into struggle during the epoch of liberalism (namely, the reduction of their living standards at the moment of crisis) exist henceforth as a permanent condition.
- 2- Reforms, nationalization, centralization, labor-management co-administration, are no longer, as in the epoch of liberalism, repugnant, but are now introduced in the guise of practicality.

Parallel to this, the mass organizations born at the beginning of the century on a grand scale, are being developed unceasingly. The masses, more and more interested in political and social life, participate in it.

#### The Formation of the Party Cadres Under Totalitarianism

For a correct consideration of the problem it is necessary to consider it in its historic progression: a) In the liberalist epoch, the formation of the cadres of the Revolutionary Class Party takes place in the period of the crisis of capitalism evolving organically toward the failure of the State.

The Party plays the specific role of directing the class struggle toward the seizure of power and the destruction of the National State, when the crisis brings about the failure of the State and gives rise to workers' councils.

b) In the period from 1923-1940: (the evolution toward state intervention); the type of social crisis that permits the posing of the problem of the formation of the party remains the same. It is a crisis that originates in the economic sector which develops strikes to the stage of the general strike and involves the failure of the state, giving rise to the workers' councils. This type of social crisis is notably manifested in Western Europe (Belgium, France, Spain) until the crisis of 1929. This situation created the conditions for the economic struggle starting in 1930-1932, and evolved toward the general strike situation of 1936. It is therefore in the unique example of Spain that this crisis overflowed from the economic into the social crisis, raising the question of power in July, August 1936.

The two new elements that intervene in this period in regard to the position of the State in face of the crisis, and the formation of the revolutionary party are the following:-

1- The Dominant Political Forces: the Stalinists, Social-Democrats, Trotskyists and Anarchists

oriented the workers on a democratic and anti-fascist program. Through this method, they assured the political neutrality of the workers toward the State. Through this method, they made possible state intervention into the economy. This political orientation involved the masses in greater and greater numbers, in the same proportion as the reduction of their standard of living, forced them to interest themselves in political life. In this way was created within the working class a general political situation of a nationalist character which prevented the development of revolutionary political action parallel to the organic growth of the economic crisis into a social crisis and into the crisis of the State. This general political orientation of the workers prevented, finally, the spreading of the ideas and revolutionary program of the vanguard (namely, the Left Communist International) and limited it therefore to the infinitesimal scale of isolated groups, few in number and without possibility of action.

2- The Dominant Economic Forces: the revolutionary events of 1917-1927, emerging from the general crisis of decay capitalism, inaugurated historically, the period of state intervention. Its victory on a world scale should have signified the end of economic oppression and the entry of humanity into the period of economic freedom, that is to say, into a period in which (no longer being submitted to the social experience of production of surplus value under the form of capital) humanity takes into its hands its own destiny and begins consciously, to make its own history.

These revolutionary events, meanwhile, have not triumphed. The bourgeoisie has reestablished its authority over society. But it could not establish its hegemony on the basis of the principles of government of the liberalist epoch, in which the system functioned solely on the development of internal forces. The bourgeoisie, in order to preserve itself, had to plan, to orient the whole of social activities toward certain goals. The organic base of the bourgeois planning, resides in the recourse to a new type of accumulation of capital: decadent accumulation, or, in other words, the financing of the economy by the State. The system could not work

any longer under the liberalistic form, because the possibilities of accumulation of capital under the liberalist form was exhausted. The process of draining surplus capital is exhausted. The accumulation of capital is no longer possible other than through State intervention. Therefore, at each breakdown of production, the State will intervene to put the economy back to work.

This intervention of the State in the financing of the economy is unable to prevent the reduction of the standard of living of the masses, and leads organically to the economy of war.

The different stages of the intervention of the State in the economic domain, in its aim to relieve the economic stagnation, mark a progressive control of the Bourgeoisie over the knowledge of principles of government in its period of decay.

The access of the bourgeoisie to this knowledge does not provide a scientific analysis of society; an analysis which should present clearly a doctrine of government capable of assuring the permanence of the bourgeoisie. The method of government of the decadent bourgeoisie appears on the basis of an experience whose first application was demonstrated in the revolutionary crisis of 1923 in Germany.

In 1923, the revolutionary upsurge failed, and the disintegration of the state of the bourgeoisie disclosed the means of government which were put into operation by the social-democracy under the label of "economic democracy", and whose real content was the reconstruction of the economic apparatus of the bourgeoisie to the point of financing it by the German state, and the Young and Dawes Plans.

After this period, the different interventions of the State into the economic domain at the moments of crisis, mark an increase of knowledge by the bourgeoisie of the method of government during its decadence, and its greater control over the economic apparatus.

In 1929-1933, the German bourgeoisie did not wait any longer for the economic stagnation to degenerate into great social struggles, susceptible

of degenerating into revolutionary crisis. After the decadent capital accumulation for the financing of this reconstruction, it began with success a new stage of decadent accumulation for the financing of the Nazi war economy.

The capacity of the German bourgeoisie to recover first, decadent accumulation crisis of 1929, contrasted with the inability of the Occidental Bourgeoisies, to prevent the birth and development of an economic crisis evolving toward the general strike (and in Spain, toward the social crisis). This capacity, in Germany, is not explained by any superiority of the German "race". It is not explained by specifically German conditions, but better explained by class factors which were more developed in Germany than in the other countries. It is explained by the fact that the "democratic economy" prior to it had already neutralized politically the German working class in relation to the State, in the orientation through the co-administration of labor-management committees, and the collaboration of classes, toward the political integration into the nationalist programs.

This is confirmed by the fact that the bourgeoisies of other countries were able to begin the financing of war economy to the degree that the workers were oriented politically by the anti-fascist programs toward neutrality and impotence in face of the State.

Decadent capital accumulation and the political position of the workers are therefore intimately connected. They condition one another. The more the workers act on the basis of a nationalist political program, the more the possibilities of expansion of decadent capital accumulation.

To sum up:- the period of 1923-1940 allowed the continuation of the old pattern of appearance of revolutionary crisis. But the unfolding by inverse proportion, of the workers into the national democratic political process, orients them no longer toward the destruction of the national state, but toward its reenforcement, on the pretext of anti-fascism.

This political orientation of the working class; of greater and greater support to the national state in the years 1933-1940, prevented the formation of revolutionary parties paralleling the development of the social crisis leading toward the general strike of 1936. This democratic orientation, involving the workers on a nationalist basis, created on the contrary, the conditions necessary to pass to the opening of the war in 1939. In the second World War, the Popular Fronts played the same role that the reformists did in the first World War. Both brought to the bourgeoisie the support of the masses of workers, without which the war was not possible.

c) In the epoch following the war of 1939: the national chauvinism on a world scale permits the world bourgeoisie from 1944-1945 to reinforce its rule immediately, and strengthen its control over the economic apparatus.

In 1944-1945, the bourgeoisie did not wait (as in 1917-1923) to defeat a revolutionary wave, nor as in 1929-1933, wait for a resultant paralysis of production. Even before the end of war production on a grand scale, it took measures of "reconversion" in order to avoid a breakdown of production on a grand scale that would result from the substitution of political personnel and the changing economic activity; a breakdown which would be able to give birth to great social struggles and revolutionary developments. At the same time, this reconversion having exhausted its possibilities, the American bourgeoisie did not wait for a breakdown of production, but entered a new phase of decadent accumulation; the financing of the economy by the State: the Marshall Plan. At the same time that it enters the practical phase of distribution of merchandise to the "beneficiaries", the American bourgeoisie deepens decadent accumulation by investing billions in war economy. This progression of decadent accumulation operates in the framework of nations; is inseparable from the international rivalries of the bourgeoisies; develops on the two-fold plan of submission of the "beneficiaries" of the Marshall Plan to the interests of the American bourgeoisie and the common evolution of the Russian bloc and the American toward war.

Therefore from the point of view of decadent accumulation, of its mode of movement and necessities, is determined a world political orientation toward war. And this evolution involves in their order, all the countries.

Meanwhile, within the framework of this identical general evolution toward war, is determined within the working class the differentiation of accessory situations, varying greatly according to the country.

The base of the accessory situations is found to the degree, according to the country, in which the bourgeoisie has been able to connect the workers to the decadent accumulation and the State.

Moreover, on the day after the war the destruction being heavy, and the economic situation of the bourgeoisie compromised, and the living standards of the masses reduced, the bourgeoisie must stubbornly develop a corresponding demagogy on a long-term evolution toward socialism in order to connect the workers to its reconstruction. For example, therefore, there is determined different accessory situations in neighboring countries such as Belgium and France. These situations, however, do not change the general world evolution toward war, but involves differences of a degree depending on the experience the workers have had of this demagogy on socialism, and contains more or less the possibilities of political clarification on a mass scale.

The Belgian bourgeoisie and its economic apparatus has suffered relatively little damage, and its colonization is relatively advanced by American capitalism, to which is assured the greatest economic resources, practically does not have to use this demagogy. The reconstruction itself is made almost exclusively under the auspices of an economic activity of a liberalist type, similar to the reconversion in America.

In France, by contrast, two factors have created the necessity for drastic recourse to this demagogy: the great destruction and the desperate attempt of the French bourgeoisie to maintain its empire and its independence against American enterprise, forced it to take recourse on a big scale to the principles



of decadent government; co-administration through labor-management committees, nationalization, rabid nationalism etc. These different elements create a total impotence of the workers in face of the State. The degree of this impotence permits a corresponding decadent accumulation; a corresponding effort of the State in the financing of the economy.

In England the same; great destruction and the identical attempt of this bourgeoisie to save its empire and its independence against the American, gives rise to a deepened colossal decadent accumulation; financing of the economy by the State, which is not possible other than through a corresponding demagogy on socialist construction.

Finally, in Italy the bourgeoisie submits more and more to the American bourgeoisie. But the extensive destruction and the particular situation arising, absolutely exhausted the possibilities of state financing, broke it into pieces on a grand scale in 1943, created the necessity for a very strong political apparatus of the bourgeoisie over the working class, and a corresponding demagogy on democratic reconstruction.

In the countries of Eastern Europe and Germany, finally, the degree of destruction is such that the bourgeoisie owed its ruin to the sum-total of situations under the rigid regime of the Police State (above all in Eastern Europe and in Soviet-ruled Germany) parallel with a formidable demagogy on Socialism.

Thus is created in the framework of the same general world evolution toward war, a mosaic of political situations in which the working class is more or less engaged (according to the country) in a situation which is exposed sharply here in their bare crudity, the sole method of government of the bourgeoisie in the decay phase. On the other hand, in other countries this same method takes on the superficial aspects of the liberalist epoch.

The period from 1944 till now shows thus, a great difference in relation to that of 1923-1939. At this moment, the method of government of the

decadent bourgeoisie only begins to appear, itself following from an empiric experience. In France, Belgium and Spain, we should witness again the unfolding of a social crisis of a liberalist type arising from an economic crisis, should produce strikes evolving toward the general strike and leading organically toward the collapse of the state. Neither the formulation of the cadres of the Revolutionary Class Party, nor for the strongest reason, the mass action of this party, are possible because of the continuing political nationalist democratic anti-fascist orientation of the workers which creates their impotence in face of the national State.

After 1944, the bourgeoisie definitely took cognizance of the method of government in the period of decay.

It intervenes in the economic sector to prevent the crisis it produces, to the stage of the reinforcement of the decadent accumulation leading to the economy of war.

In this framework, the inevitable reduction of the standard of living of the masses evolves without a break to a new status of the working class (and the population in general). It interests itself in political life, to the same degree in which the general situation conditions their personal situation. The flow of new masses toward political life does not offer any base for revolutionary propaganda. On the contrary, these masses, without any political experience, are naturally carried toward nationalism and are a guarantee rather than a menace for the bourgeoisie.

Finally, paralleling, but in an opposite direction than the practice of labor-management collaboration, nationalization, and demagogy on socialism and reconstruction, there is created within the working class the conditions for political clarification, capable of exposing their reactionary and pro-capitalist role to the degree in which the working class has undergone the experience.

It is on the basis of what is presented in this analysis that it is possible to understand and relate the particular situation of the vanguard in Italy



to the general situation of the vanguard in other countries under the present conditions of totalitarianism of capitalism; pre-state and state capitalism.

The new factors in the problem of the formation of the cadres of the Revolutionary Party in the period after the war of 1939, are therefore the following:-

1) The constant reduction of the living standards of the masses exists henceforth as a permanent fact and pushes them into struggle. Meanwhile, this tendency to struggle is combatted by their nationalistic political orientation, which fundamentally involves the notion of class-collaboration. From this there results fluctuating movements of wild-cat strikes which have no perspective.

2) When (in spite of this nationalist ideology) they enter in struggle, there is no longer involved as before 1940, a fundamental development toward the general strike and the collapse of the State. This is so, because of the new State intervention in relation to the crisis.

3) Greater and greater masses participate in political life.

4) The policy of "reforms" of the capitalist structure create within still limited sectors of the working class the conditions for political clarification. This meanwhile is the limited duty of the Revolutionary Working Class Party which already disposes of a certain political experience. That is proven by the activity of Stalinism in the countries it controls: their first worry is to liquidate the "leftists" and to rest more and more on the bases, politically, of the most backward sections of the populations.

To the degree in which the vanguard is able to bring about this clarification by its propaganda work, to that degree is created the possibility of growth of the sections of the Left Communist movement. But there is a fundamental difference between this growth under present conditions and that of the Bolsheviks from 1896-1905. The difference is that at that moment, this growth was connected with the unfolding of a situation leading fundamentally to the collapse of the State and the revolutionary assault. Today, the growth of the sections of the

Left Communist movement is connected to a situation which does not lead organically to the collapse of the State, precisely because of the new position of the State in relation to crisis.

Consequently, if yesterday the growth of the Bolshevik fraction within the years 1896-1905, was inseparable from an ascendant march toward revolution, today this same growth does not mean there is a revolutionary crisis. On the other hand, the growth of any fraction is effected and is possible not because the intervention of the State in reference to the economic crisis determines the conditions for the growth of the Fractions; for the formation of the cadres of the Revolutionary Party in spite of the fact there is a generalized tendency toward Imperialist War.

#### Possibilities and Limits of the Present Situation

The problem of the formation of the Revolutionary Class Party being thus exposed in its essence (which is the position of the bourgeois State in relation to crisis), the fundamental difference between the growth of Fractions after 1943-1944, in relation to that after 1896-1898, is self-evident.

At the time of the formation of the Bolshevik Party, the economic crisis brought about the reduction of the standard of living of the masses, leading in an ascending line to general strike, social crisis, the collapse of the State and the appearance of Workers' Councils. The Russian Bolshevik fraction (intervening in such a period) played a consistently militant role which not only touched off the fires of struggle, but had, in this same developing situation, a degree of revolutionary success. At the same time the general strikes spread, shaking the foundations of the State. At the same time that the situation inspired general strikes, the Petrograd Soviet appeared and in the agrarian districts, the beginning of revolutionary action. The fundamental connection between the development of the social crisis and the collapse of the State (opening

up the possibility of the revolutionary assault), such is the firm base on which the Bolshevik Party was formed.

Today, this is all changed.

The basis exists today for the growth of Fractions (the reduction of the standard of living of the masses, engendering strikes) but is no longer connected to a historic process leading to the collapse, more or less near, of the State. The present intervention of the State in relation to the crisis brings strikes that are not integrated in a rising wave toward the general strike and the insurrectionary situation, but are "wildcat", or sporadic strikes without perspective.

Today as yesterday, there is an influx of militants into the Fraction (in the Italian conditions) no longer see an ascendant process toward revolution, bringing with it the positive affirmation on the scale of a party with a mass base. The new position of intervention of the State, in relation to the crisis, demolished the perspective of an eventual revolutionary evolution of situations, that the militants had in the old days. It is this and nothing else which explains the membership turn-over of our Party in Italy.

Today as yesterday there is an influx of new masses to political life. But the contact with them by the various parties has increased very little, due to the reduced means of propaganda. Yesterday one such situation created the possibility of fruitful propaganda activity of revolutionary groups. Today the masses submit to the concentric fire of totalitarian propaganda, which leads them to support nationalist programs.

Today there no longer exists a situation in which the working masses carry on, more or less, toward revolution, and in which by the same token, the bourgeoisie expresses its hostility to Socialism. Today, in the phase of pre-State capitalism and State Capitalism, the bourgeoisie and its innumerable blind supporters, themselves use a "socialist" language, preserving thereby their hold on the politically backward masses.

Yesterday, the growth of Fractions was placed in the framework of the formation of mass organizations, which brought the possibility of a very large circulation of the press, addressing itself to workers whose minds were politically virgin. Today the growth of Fractions is placed in the framework of the existence of mass organizations in which the membership is politically nationalist. The basis for recruitment and circulation of the press is consequently limited to the masses who have had already a certain political experience and begin to be sceptical about the proletarian virtue of nationalist programs. It is this and nothing else which explains the comparatively little important circulation of the press of the Left Communists.

The present situation, therefore, does not permit us to suppose that the social unrest manifesting itself in wildcat or sporadic strikes, contains the possibility of an organic evolution toward the collapse of the State, as long as the objective limits of the decadent accumulation of capital (state financing of the economy; state capitalism) is not reached. As in Italy in 1943, this collapse will be the signal for great social struggles, at the time of the exhausting of the financing of the economy by the State; the formation of a bloc of nations and the subordination of weaker countries to the stronger, preventing these States from sinking into collapse, by integrating them into blocs of States.

On the other hand, if such a collapse presented itself as a direct perspective, Capitalism still has the capacity to install the police-state to crush all revolutionary striving, in the iron collar of police terror, and finding the conditions for a new stage of decadent accumulation of capital in an upset of relationships within its own class. The revolutionary militants are unable to oppose in any manner such measures, because the base for a proletarian intervention (that is the spontaneous struggle of compact masses of workers at the time of the collapse of the State) is absent. The masses, politically backward, offers sufficient base of recruitment for capital, in order to form a new political movement which crushes all will for action of the revolutionary vanguard.

As from 1923-1940, the present situation does not contain the perspective of conquest of the masses with revolutionary slogans, and the leadership of the class struggle by the party for the assault against the national state. By contrast, that which is changed,

are the conditions for the activity of the Fractions, and the conditions for the formation of cadres of the Revolutionary Class Party.

The question therefore is posed:-

"Since the present situation does not contain the conditions for an assault against the State, since on the contrary if it is in the interests of the bourgeoisie to establish a Police State with a regime of concentration camps, nobody being able to oppose it in any manner as a result; since the formidable means of moral pressure of totalitarian propaganda and of "socialistic" demagogy of the bourgeoisie in its decline is able to take in hand the workers who escape them today, reducing to nothing the painful work of formation of cadres of the Fractions; being given all this, the question is posed:

Is it worthwhile for comrades to be exposed to the punishing rigours of the repression? Is it worthwhile to do the painful and absorbing work of the formation of cadres and political education? Should the work be done that builds the fractions?

The answer, considering that it is the duty of revolutionary militants to do their work in disregard of all danger if this work is to serve the interests of the working class; that the struggle of the proletariat against capital cannot be anything but dangerous and bloody; that it would be criminal not to organize the workers who are beginning to escape the hold of nationalist programs, in order to lead them toward the Internationalist program of Socialism, the answer has already been given by our Fractions.

Yesterday, against the promptings of Trotskyism, the Fractions asserted that the political conditions existing within the working class forbade the formation of parties without falling into opportunism. The Fractions of the Left Communists at that time claimed that it was premature to form the new Revolutionary Party.

Today, against the postponements, which have not taken into account the new conditions that created State intervention in relation to the social crisis, intervention which created within as yet limited sectors of the working class, the conditions for political clarification, the Fractions of the Left Communists have already answered this question: - "The New Revolutionary Party of the Working Class shall be built."

Lucaín - June, 1948